

in Great Britain, though in the latter case they are rarely if ever organized for degree purposes. What distinguishes the New Zealand system is the completely dominant position these evening classes hold in the University. It is not a little surprising to any one acquainted with the normal working of the universities in the rest of the English-speaking world to learn that in two at least of the New Zealand colleges there are, apart from the special schools (medicine, dentistry, engineering, mining), virtually no lectures at the pass stage between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., and that the degree work in each college is mainly organized for the convenience of the evening student who is engaged in some full-time occupation during the day, and that the whole-time student has to adapt himself to these conditions and take all his lectures between 5 and 8 p.m. The inevitable result of such a system is to lower the standard of the university work and impair its ideals. There is here a singular consensus of opinion among the witnesses. Practically all university teachers who were questioned on the subject, even those who thought that the system would on other grounds have to be continued, admitted that the effect was to lower the standard; nor did any witness seriously attempt to maintain the contrary.

Effect on university standards.

“If you have a large class, and the larger percentage of your students are working during the day and come at night with more or less jaded faculties, it must make a difference in the standard of the work.” “By having day-work you would naturally maintain your classes at a higher level.” “My opinion is that the standard of passing has come down: I would attribute this very largely to the night-work.” (*Professor Segar, Auckland.*)

“Neither staff nor students are in a state for really effective work when the maximum intellectual strain is thrown upon them.” “I give my pass lectures from 4 to 5 or from 5 to 6. Neither my students nor myself are really fit to do our best at that hour after having been on duty at some work from 9 in the morning.” (*Professor Denham, Canterbury.*)

Mr. T. U. Wells (member of the Auckland Council) gave as his opinion, “If a student were engaged during the day earning a livelihood his scholarship would suffer.” The same witness pointed out the unfairness of school-teachers taking their degree in this way: “A man who studies at night is not able to give his class the best of his services during the day.”

Effect on physical health of students.

Several witnesses insisted on the bad effect on the health of the students.

“The expenditure of energy both ways, except in cases of very robust adolescence, is a very bad principle” (*Professor Sperrin-Johnson, Auckland*)—adding that night-work in laboratories is injurious to the eyesight: “Artificial light has a cumulative bad effect on the eyes.”

“Night-work is particularly harmful in science owing to the ill effects of artificial light in judging colour, &c.” (*Professor Burbidge, Auckland.*)

There is in consequence a tendency on the part of science teachers to change their classes to the daytime. Professor Worley, of Auckland, who has already carried out this change in the Chemistry Department, stated that it had “greatly improved the College standards,” and that the numbers in his classes had actually risen notwithstanding.

Effect on the university staff.

The effect on the staff is equally unfortunate, particularly where the teacher endeavours to do justice to full-time students by taking them earlier in the day. He has to run two systems of teaching concurrently. Such a programme leaves him neither time nor energy for the original work, which is not only important for the reputation of the University, but essential if the ordinary degree teaching is to be maintained at a high level of vitality. Evidence generally supports the statement of Professor Powell (Canterbury): “Day-work plus evening-work leaves no room for research, or even for keeping abreast of the knowledge of one’s subject.” It may be mentioned that it is the invariable rule in Great Britain and in Australia that to avoid duplication of lectures by professors through the necessities of the evening lecture system a supplementary staff is employed.

Effect on the student activities.

But, if it inevitably impairs the quality of the studies, evening instruction has an even more injurious effect on the corporate student life which forms so valuable a part of university training. It has been said that at least half the benefit which a student gains from his university is derived not from his professors, but from free intercourse with his fellow-students on the athletic fields, in student committees,